
2003-2004 *No Child Left Behind*—Blue Ribbon Schools Program
Cover SheetName of Principal Dr. David L. Townsend
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other) (As it should appear in the official records)Official School Name Emerson Elementary School
(As it should appear in the official records)School Mailing Address 2705 Avenue E
(If address is P.O. Box, also include street address)

<u>Kearney</u>	<u>Nebraska</u>	<u>68847-3602</u>
City	State	Zip Code+4 (9 digits total)

Tel. (308) 698-8270 Fax (308) 698-8273Website/URL www.kearneypublicschools.org E-mail dtownsen@kearneypublic.org

I have reviewed the information in this application, including the eligibility requirements on page 2, and certify that to the best of my knowledge all information is accurate.

(Principal's Signature) Date Jaunary 29, 2004

Name of Superintendent* Dr. Kenneth Anderson
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)District Name Kearney Public Schools Tel. (308) 698-8000

I have reviewed the information in this application, including the eligibility requirements on page 2, and certify that to the best of my knowledge it is accurate.

(Superintendent's Signature) Date Jaunary 29, 2004

Name of School Board
President/Chairperson Mr. David Glover
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

I have reviewed the information in this package, including the eligibility requirements on page 2, and certify that to the best of my knowledge it is accurate.

(School Board President's/Chairperson's Signature) Date Jaunary 29, 2004

**Private Schools: If the information requested is not applicable, write N/A in the space.*

PART I - ELIGIBILITY CERTIFICATION

[Include this page in the school's application as page 2.]

The signatures on the first page of this application certify that each of the statements below concerning the school's eligibility and compliance with U.S. Department of Education, Office of Civil Rights (OCR) requirements is true and correct.

1. The school has some configuration that includes grades K-12. (Schools with one principal, even K-12 schools, must apply as an entire school.)
2. The school has not been in school improvement status or been identified by the state as "persistently dangerous" within the last two years. To meet final eligibility, the school must meet the state's adequate yearly progress requirement in the 2003-2004 school year.
3. If the school includes grades 7 or higher, it has foreign language as a part of its core curriculum.
4. The school has been in existence for five full years, that is, from at least September 1998.
5. The nominated school or district is not refusing the OCR access to information necessary to investigate a civil rights complaint or to conduct a district-wide compliance review.
6. The OCR has not issued a violation letter of findings to the school district concluding that the nominated school or the district as a whole has violated one or more of the civil rights statutes. A violation letter of findings will not be considered outstanding if the OCR has accepted a corrective action plan from the district to remedy the violation.
7. The U.S. Department of Justice does not have a pending suit alleging that the nominated school, or the school district as a whole, has violated one or more of the civil rights statutes or the Constitution's equal protection clause.
8. There are no findings of violations of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act in a U.S. Department of Education monitoring report that apply to the school or school district in question; or if there are such findings, the state or district has corrected, or agreed to correct, the findings.

PART II - DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

All data are the most recent year available.

DISTRICT (Questions 1-2 not applicable to private schools)

1. Number of schools in the district: 9 Elementary schools
 2 Middle Schools
 _____ Junior high schools
 1 High schools
 _____ Other (Briefly explain)
 12 TOTAL

2. District Per Pupil Expenditure: \$6,620.52
 Average State Per Pupil Expenditure: \$7,497.35

SCHOOL (To be completed by all schools)

3. Category that best describes the area where the school is located:

- ☐ Urban or large central city
☐ Suburban school with characteristics typical of an urban area
☐ Suburban
☒ Small city or town in a rural area
☐ Rural

4. 23 Number of years the principal has been in her/his position at this school.
 _____ If fewer than three years, how long was the previous principal at this school?

5. Number of students enrolled at each grade level or its equivalent in applying school:

Grade	# of Males	# of Females	Grade Total		Grade	# of Males	# of Females	Grade Total
K	20	25	45		7			
1	20	17	37		8			
2	26	14	40		9			
3	21	14	35		10			
4	23	25	48		11			
5	17	18	35		12			
6					Other			
TOTAL STUDENTS IN THE APPLYING SCHOOL →								240

6. Racial/ethnic composition of the students in the school:
- | |
|--|
| <u>90.0</u> % White |
| <u>.82</u> % Black or African American |
| <u>6.70</u> % Hispanic or Latino |
| <u>.82</u> % Asian/Pacific Islander |
| <u>1.66</u> % American Indian/Alaskan Native |
| 100% Total |

7. Student turnover, or mobility rate, during the past year: 14.8 %

(This rate includes the total number of students who transferred to or from different schools between October 1 and the end of the school year, divided by the total number of students in the school as of October 1, multiplied by 100.)

(1)	Number of students who transferred <i>to</i> the school after October 1 until the end of the year.	25
(2)	Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1 until the end of the year.	12
(3)	Subtotal of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	37
(4)	Total number of students in the school as of October 1	250
(5)	Subtotal in row (3) divided by total in row (4)	.148
(6)	Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100	14.8

8. Limited English Proficient students in the school: 0 %
0 Total Number Limited English Proficient
 Number of languages represented: 0
 Specify languages:

9. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 58.8 %
139 Total Number Students Who Qualify

If this method does not produce a reasonably accurate estimate of the percentage of students from low-income families or the school does not participate in the federally-supported lunch program, specify a more accurate estimate, tell why the school chose it, and explain how it arrived at this estimate.

10. Students receiving special education services: 16.67 %
40 Total Number of Students Served

Indicate below the number of students with disabilities according to conditions designated in the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act.

<u> 1 </u> Autism	<u> 2 </u> Orthopedic Impairment
<u> </u> Deafness	<u> 4 </u> Other Health Impaired
<u> </u> Deaf-Blindness	<u> 14 </u> Specific Learning Disability
<u> </u> Hearing Impairment	<u> 14 </u> Speech or Language Impairment
<u> 5 </u> Mental Retardation	<u> </u> Traumatic Brain Injury
<u> </u> Multiple Disabilities	<u> </u> Visual Impairment Including Blindness

11. Indicate number of full-time and part-time staff members in each of the categories below:

Number of Staff

	<u>Full-time</u>	<u>Part-Time</u>
Administrator(s)	<u> 1 </u>	<u> </u>
Classroom teachers	<u> 10 </u>	<u> 2 </u>
Special resource teachers/specialists	<u> </u>	<u> 10 </u>
Paraprofessionals	<u> 5 </u>	<u> 1 </u>
Support staff	<u> 3 </u>	<u> 2 </u>
Total number	<u> 19 </u>	<u> 15 </u>

12. Average school student-“classroom teacher” ratio: 20:1
13. Show the attendance patterns of teachers and students as a percentage. The student dropout rate is defined by the state. The student drop-off rate is the difference between the number of entering students and the number of exiting students from the same cohort. (From the same cohort, subtract the number of exiting students from the number of entering students; divide that number by the number of entering students; multiply by 100 to get the percentage drop-off rate.) Briefly explain in 100 words or fewer any major discrepancy between the dropout rate and the drop-off rate. (Only middle and high schools need to supply dropout rates and only high schools need to supply drop-off rates.)

	2002-2003	2001-2002	2000-2001	1999-2000	1998-1999
Daily student attendance	96%	96.2%	96%	95.6%	95.5%
Daily teacher attendance	94.2	93.1%	93.75%	93.1%	94.8%
Teacher turnover rate	13%	9%	9%	17%	9%
Student dropout rate					
Student drop-off rate					

PART III - SUMMARY

Emerson Elementary School serves neighborhoods in the east central section of Kearney, Nebraska, which is a community located in South Central Nebraska along Interstate 80. The city of Kearney has a population of approximately 28,000 people and serves the home campus for the University of Nebraska at Kearney. Emerson is one of nine elementary schools in the Kearney Public Schools system. The current Emerson school building was rebuilt in 1952 as a K-6, two-unit school to replace the old two-story facility. In the fall of 1996, Emerson was remodeled structurally and organizationally to serve students in grades Kindergarten to fifth grade, with the sixth grade being relocated to the new Sunrise Middle School in the district. At that time, the physical space was modified to increase instructional space for computer, special education services, music, art, and reading programs. Currently, class sizes range from 15 to 25 students, with total enrollment of 240.

The faculty at Emerson consists of 10 full time and two part-time classroom teachers, 10.0 part-time specialists including a 1.5 FTE Title I Reading position, 5.5 FTE paraprofessionals, 4.0 support staff and a full time principal. Specialists serve Emerson on a part-time basis and include counselor, resource, speech/language, physical education, music, orchestra, art, and adaptive P.E. About 75% of the classroom teachers at Emerson have seven or more years experience and professional training at the BA+36 or Masters Degree level. Support staff includes a secretary, nurse, 1.5 FTE custodians, and two food service workers.

Throughout our school's history, teaching methods have changed as well as the demand for resources to include equipment and technological hardware and software. Our staff at Emerson has sought to be innovative and to provide our students with instruction and opportunities that will enable them to learn as much as possible while being creative, resourceful, and responsible. Beginning in the school year 1998-1999, Emerson began to offer the Year Round calendar in addition to the Conventional calendar program as an option for parents and students. Our goal has been, and continues to be, to treat ALL of our students as unique individuals, to demonstrate caring, concern and respect for students and families in a safe, consistent environment for learning. The staff is committed to these goals and beliefs. They set high expectations for students and are committed to helping each child learn and grow.

We strive to build relationships with our families and to make parents a critical part of the education process. The successes at our school are greatly enhanced with the efforts and support of our families. We are proud of our students, those who are currently here, those who are continuing their formal education, and those who have moved on to successful careers as adults.

Emerson is proud of the educational partnerships that have been established, specifically with our parents and the College of Education at the University of Nebraska at Kearney. Our parents have a tradition of involvement and support. We utilize parent and community volunteers to assist in our classrooms on a daily basis. Our Parent Teacher Organization (PTO) provides a forum to discuss school issues and to share ideas. In addition, it has been a significant monetary contributor to enable programs, equipment, and materials for our staff and students.

The University of Nebraska at Kearney is a valued educational partner. We provide a variety of learning opportunities for pre-service teachers from UNK to work with our mentor teachers in our classrooms. Recently, we have served as extended classrooms for students in methods classes to build solid and relevant teaching experiences for UNK students.

PART IV – INDICATORS OF ACADEMIC SUCCESS

1. Emerson Elementary School assesses all students in several ways ranging from assessments on daily performance on class work to more formal and comprehensive measures through the use of criterion-referenced and nationally normed standardized tests. Teachers use daily/weekly assessments to provide quick and very useful information about student performance that helps shape lesson content from day to day and, in some instances, during the lesson itself. Some of these can be as simple as asking questions and observing students work to more deliberate means such as quizzes and tests. Teachers reflect on these to determine if students are being successful and to change their lesson structure and activity. Criterion-referenced and norm-referenced tests are more structured and deliberate in purpose.

Criterion-referenced tests are carefully selected measures to check student performance directly in relation to what they have been taught. Emerson teachers use the Nebraska Assessments that are derived directly from the Nebraska Standards and Benchmarks. It is highly desirable to have students achieve well on these tests because it is a direct reflection of their success on the content they have been directly/immediately taught and expected to achieve. Course objectives in turn are aligned very closely with state standards and national goals. In this sense, we can compare students to several sets of expectations deemed important by our local, state and national educational leaders. For instance, we will know 1) individually if the student is achieving what is intended for them to learn at their appropriate level in the curriculum, 2) collectively if a group of students is achieving at their appropriate and expected level and 3) if the individual and/or group is successful when compared to other individuals and groups who have been taught and expected to achieve the same performance objectives in Nebraska and in the United States. We use these to monitor students' performance extensively. Classroom teachers use this at our building by giving these tests throughout the school year to make decisions about our success. **As you will see in the data section of this application, 79%-90%, of Emerson students have achieved at proficient/advance levels in language and math at the fourth grade on the Nebraska standards for the past three years. In the years that state scores have been available, Emerson scores have exceeded the state average by 9 to 10 percentage points. Specifically, in 2001-2002 for math, Emerson had 87% of its students at the proficient/advanced levels. In 2002-2003, Emerson had 86% of its students score at the proficient/advanced level. State scores for group averages in those subjects during those years were of 78% and 76% respectively. In addition, eight (8) of the specific standard components measured for language and math those years had 100% of the Emerson group achieving the proficient/advance levels.**

Norm-referenced tests are standardized measures intended to sort students into various groups according to performance; however, the content of these assessments may not be directly related to the content that the students have been taught. The test items consist of content questions that are generally within the appropriate grade or age curriculum for students, but they are not 100% aligned with the students' actual instructional program. As a result, they may assess students in content areas ranging from familiar to unfamiliar. In this manner, we may begin to see differences in student performance emerge that may be more dependent on student experiences, backgrounds, educational opportunities, and intellectual abilities rather than their success based on what they have been deliberately or directly taught. As these tests are taken by students from all across the country, they do provide useful information to compare all sectors of our population. Emerson uses the California Achievement Tests to measure our students and to provide comparative results. **As you will see in the data section of this application, Emerson students, with nearly 59% coming from disadvantaged backgrounds, scored at or above the 50th percentile for all three years in which they were assessed. In addition, the specific subgroup of students for free and reduced scored within comparable ranges of the group as a whole for each grade of students measured. In one-third of the scores reported, the score for the free and reduced subgroup equals or exceeds the score of the entire group.**

2. The teachers at Emerson continuously and frequently use assessment data for the purpose of making decisions about instruction and curriculum. We have truly moved into the era of assessment driving instruction. We are no longer in the age of a text driven curriculum and have not been for quite some time. Teachers administer basic assessments in reading, writing and math throughout the entire year that are taken directly from the assessments developed by the Kearney Public Schools and approved by the state. Results are recorded electronically and monitored constantly from the first day of school. Teachers use this information as feedback about student success on a daily basis and in turn make decisions about instruction. In addition, the student results are assimilated into group reports for building, district and state use.

The entire school improvement efforts in our building and district are driven by assessment that is generated from these efforts. We review the information from these assessments as well as assessment data from national norm testing (California Achievement Tests) and district-wide writing assessments. From this information, we have developed student learning goals in the various areas of curriculum. We meet as a staff a minimum of four times a year to review the progress on these goals and to develop or pursue professional development relative to teaching skills and proficiencies that might be needed to deliver the best instruction for the goals.

Within the assessment practice at Emerson, we have moved beyond the basic district requirements to pursue additional information about the pre-school and kindergarten students. We have used this information to select materials, plan parent workshops and to develop programs for our younger students and parent population relative to the needs indicated by the data.

3. Student performance information is communicated to parents in many ways ranging from the traditional bi-annual parent-teacher conferences and quarterly report cards to less traditional methods such as e-mail. In the fall of the year, we have parent meetings specific to grade levels and content areas such as Title I Reading. Parents are asked to attend these meetings to receive and discuss information concerning our assessment and student performance expectations. Our specific programs and efforts to involve them in the process are also a topic of discussion at our regular Parent Teacher Organization meetings. One of these meetings each year is used to share results of student performance data. Standard progress reports are sent home quarterly in the student report cards, which include assessment information about student performance on the reading and math standards. We send home written standardized test results in the spring and offer follow-up individual conferences with classroom teachers, our counselor and principal. Individually and collectively we have done “home visits” with parents. This has been very effective and enlightening for staff and parents, not to mention very exciting for students.

The teachers publish weekly newsletters in addition to the monthly building-wide newsletter from the principal that frequently mention student performance as well as parent strategies to assist with higher achievement. Student Assistance Team meetings, which are convened for challenging students, are always inclusive of all available and relevant student performance data for the individual and group.

Beyond this, we have established a website this year and are in the process of determining how this can be utilized in a secure manner for sharing up-to-date student performance data. During the past year, we have been able to inform parents of the Nebraska Department of Education’s website to review our school and school districts’ state standards results. Individually, we have made information available directly from the teacher to parents with e-mail. School-wide student performance information is communicated periodically through our communications coordinator to the mass media.

4. Emerson Elementary has been and is very willing to share its student performance information with other schools within the district and within the state. If we are awarded the Blue Ribbon Award from the National Department of Education, we will be looking forward to doing the same nationally. First of all, our local efforts and performance are most easily shared at the district level by working with our district school improvement team. The team is made up of representatives, principals and teachers of all buildings in the district to review data. The data serves to identify strengths as well as areas in need of strengthening for the district as a whole. We take advantage of this opportunity to review strategies that seem to relate to success of our students as well as strategies that others are using to cause the same successes in their buildings. This is a very rich experience for all of us. Beyond this, our classroom teachers share this information at district grade level meetings structured to review curriculum and performance of our students on the standards as measured by the assessments. Outside of our local efforts, we participate in a periodic review of data with an external team made up of educators from all over the state. This group reviews our data purposely to assure our efforts are focused on improving instruction and student achievement. This information in turn is communicated to the community at-large as well as other districts in the state and our Department of Education.

Periodically, several of the staff at Emerson have been asked to make presentations at other schools in the state concerning our “year round” and “conventional” tracks of program organization within our building. Student performance is a question that is always asked by those attending the presentations, which makes it natural to share student achievement information.

PART V – CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

1. Emerson Elementary School offers a comprehensive instructional program designed to meet the needs and talents of all students. Our students develop skills in the core areas of language arts, math, science, and social studies. Art, media, music, and physical education are designed to support and align with other areas of the curriculum and are offered kindergarten through fifth grade (K-5). Special Education, Title I and High Ability Learner programs are provided for students with unique learning needs. In addition to the core areas of instruction, technology is woven into the curriculum. Additional support is provided with other programs at Emerson inclusive of Guidance and D.A.R.E. Student planners are completed daily by students and teachers as a means of connecting the curriculum with parents.

Instruction at Emerson Elementary School is guided by the Kearney Public Schools' instructional standards. These standards were aligned closely with the Nebraska State Standards and further developed to exceed those performance expectations. Our standards and benchmarks clearly state what students are expected to know and be able to do at each grade level. Instruction is linked to state and district standards that are monitored through the use of criterion-referenced assessments in all classrooms continually throughout the school year.

The language arts curriculum is based on a Balanced Literacy Approach. The components include guided reading, spelling, shared reading, read-aloud time, and Scholastic's Reading Counts. The Scholastic Reading Program was adopted in the 2000-2001 school year. Classroom teachers were provided with staff development in the Balanced Literacy Approach and the Write Traits writing process. Support is given in the language arts area with programs such as Title I Reading, Media Services, America Reads in cooperation with the Federal Department of Education and Special Education services. Children write at all grade levels in all curricular areas for a variety of purposes. Our handwriting curriculum uses the Zaner-Bloser handwriting methodology.

Our math curriculum consists of Harcourt Brace for kindergarten and Houghton-Mifflin for grades one through five. Those texts were selected because of their alignment with the Kearney Public Schools standards and benchmarks and in turn the Nebraska State Standards. Math instruction centers on the seven standards of numeration/number sense, computation, measurement, geometry, data analysis, algebra, and problem solving. Instruction is delivered in a variety of methods including hands on manipulatives, cooperative groups and individual student practice.

The science curriculum uses the FOSS program, with additional support from AIMS, Weekly Reader, Scholastic News, Time for Kids, and units developed by the district. Standards that are taught across the grade levels include physical science, science as inquiry, unifying concepts and processes, life sciences, earth and space science, technology, science in personal and social perspectives, and the history and nature of science. The curriculum emphasizes the use of the scientific process.

The Social Studies curriculum has been aligned with the Nebraska State Standards. Social Studies instruction is based on the strands of geography, economics, civics, culture/behavior and history.

All of the areas of our curriculum are either assessed currently or are in the process of having assessments developed for the purpose of measuring specific student performance. In turn, the performance is closely monitored and used to determine areas of success and to apply that information for the planning and implementation of better curriculum, programs, and resources to assure greater student learning. At Emerson, we believe that we need to continually reflect on our programs and resources as measured by student performance indicators to make our vision a reality - "to create the learning place where all students can learn and want to be."

2. Emerson Elementary School, as part of the Kearney Public School system, uses a Balanced Literacy Approach for reading instruction. We adopted the Scholastic Reading Program five years ago to provide our students with a sequential, consistent reading curriculum. Each day, students spend time on shared reading with the whole class, guided reading with a small group of homogeneous readers and independent reading. In addition, the classroom teacher reads aloud to her students on a daily basis as part of an active and purposeful literature program. Writing also plays an integral part in the literacy instruction. It is viewed as the reciprocal process of reading. Students participate in shared writing, writer's workshop, and independent writing. Students' reading is assessed on a regular basis to determine each student's instructional reading level. On the basis of this assessment, students are placed in flexible guided reading groups. A "Reading Closet" has been established at Emerson in the Media Center to house literally thousands of copies, available in multiple sets of each copy, of leveled books for teachers to use in working with guided reading groups. At Emerson, our goal is to provide students with a wide variety of opportunities to participate in reading so that they will be able to achieve to the best of their ability. We have support reading programs such as "Reading Recovery" and Title I to individualize instruction for those students needing additional support. Parent support and assistance is made available to parents through daily contact and use of student planners. Students are able to take home packets of reading materials each night for parents to read to their children as well as listen to them read.

Within the past two years, we have actively begun to place emphasis on assessing pre-school (4 year old) children in language literacy. The primary purpose of this effort has been to determine student need and to structure summer preschool opportunities for them. In addition, Emerson is part of an effort to develop a community learning center, which will focus on providing services to both students and parents in the hope of developing better language systems for students and to increase the students' chance of learning.

3. Emerson staff, in the 1998-1999 school year, initiated a review of our organizational structure and curricular offerings within the traditional setting. As a result, we developed a choice of program format for our students and parents. In addition to the traditional calendar, we developed a "year round" track to offer the same curricular offerings as always, but added "extended learning opportunities" to those students. Essentially, students who elect to participate in this program attend school for four nine week intervals and have the choice to attend three week extended learning opportunities between the traditional quarters. These "additional" three week learning "workshops" are designed to extend, enrich or remediate the curriculum taught in the previous or ensuing quarters. In short, the students who elect this option have an additional 6 weeks of education in which they participate. The units offered in this time frame are called "Personal Achievement Workshops" and/or "Skill Builders." They include curricular offerings that are closely aligned with all areas of the school curriculum inclusive of math, writing, reading, social studies science as well as the arts. While the workshops are curricular focused, they are purposely formatted to be very much hands-on experiences involving discovery and participatory activities. Students are able to connect learning to real experiences and capitalize on the theme of relevance. We have observed many positive outcomes of this effort, inclusive of increased parent involvement, better student retention, less time needed for review, as well as a general positive attitude towards school.

As previously stated, our mission is to create a learning place where kids can learn and where kids want to be. This particular curricular and organizational innovation with our parents, students, and staff definitely makes our vision a reality. Our parents and students have choices and are active decision-makers in the process.

4. Emerson Elementary School staff implements the use of many diversified instructional methods in an effort to maximize student learning. Our partnership with the University of Nebraska at Kearney's Professional Teacher Education Department, allows us up-to-date knowledge as well as opportunities to practice effective school instructional strategies.

In the area of language, we utilize "Writer's Workshops" as a standard part of our writing program. We have built partnerships with the Teacher Education Department at the University of Nebraska-Kearney and UNK sororities to give us a very rich pool of human resources to accommodate the individualized learning experiences it takes to make "Writers Workshops" successful for students. Shared reading experiences also connect to this concept as well with our "America Reads" program. Daily Oral Language is also a common practice used by all classroom teachers to set the focus for students immediately in the morning as they enter classes. The entire staff is well immersed in the "Write Traits" writing process and has worked very successfully with students to have our students place well above the cut score on the Nebraska Writing Assessment. Guided reading groups represent a routine part of reading periods during the day. Students participate actively in this process with teachers closely monitoring and providing feedback to students during these activity periods.

In the area of math, students are exposed to a great deal of manipulatives and problem-solving strategies which were adopted four years ago. Science curriculum is also presented in the inquiry and discovery modes with the use of hands-on materials.

Relative to the over-all curriculum, students are involved in projects whenever appropriate. This allows them to gain perspectives and understandings relative to the concepts they are taught in ways that make the learning relevant and meaningful.

5. Professional development is regarded by all of the staff at Emerson as a critical component of our success with students. It provides them with the most current information and skills necessary to work with students and to keep the focus on learning. All staff members participate in "Learning Teams" within the building that meet regularly to review current and best practice. In this way teachers are exposed to what works in a meaningful way. They gain both knowledge and understandings that result in the implementation of the best instructional practice. This concept is also extended to the district level with their participation in similar activities with their grade level peers.

Every teacher at Emerson regularly attends district and building professional staff development workshops that give them the information, materials, and skills required to effectively implement current and new curriculum. In many instances, Emerson teachers provide the leadership for these workshops. For example, five of our staff members are currently serving as Trainers of Trainers in the five metacognitive areas of reading. They, in turn, help train the entire Kearney Public School elementary staff. This professional development is intended to support staff in meeting the requirements of No Child Left Behind, which expects all students to be able to read and comprehend the material they read at their appropriate grade level. Another clear example is represented by the training our entire staff participated in to gain instructional proficiencies with the "Write Traits" strategies. This was a staff development piece that was initiated to increase student performance with the writing standards identified by Kearney Public Schools and the State of Nebraska. In addition to these efforts, all Emerson staff members have been trained in the use of technology to record student assessment data relative to the standards.

PART VII - ASSESSMENT RESULTS

The test results that follow on tables A and B report the performance of Emerson Elementary School fourth grade students regarding the Nebraska Standards for Language Arts and Math for the past three years. The assessments used to measure student achievement were CRITERION-REFERENCED tests that were developed by the Kearney Public Schools and independently rated as EXEMPLARY measures in terms of validity and reliability by the Buros Institute.

The fourth grade is the grade selected by the state of Nebraska for all school districts to measure and report the success of student learning regarding the state standards in language and math.(S.T.A.R.S.) The components that are measured at this grade level reflect standards and benchmarks that are taught and expected for students to achieve throughout the entire curriculum at all levels. Please note that in each and every year of measurement, a minimum of 79% ranging up to a maximum of 89% of Emerson fourth grade students achieve at the proficient or advanced levels of performance on the Nebraska State Standards. Performance of the Emerson students stands out exceptionally well in tables A and B, where the scores reflect Emerson students in comparison to the state average levels of performance for fourth grade students. In the school year 2002-2003, reading scores for Emerson exceeded the state average by 10 full percentage points. For example, Emerson had 86% of its fourth grade students achieve proficient to advanced performance levels compared to 76% for the entire state average. (Refer to Table A) In the 2001-2002 school year, 87% of Emerson fourth grade students achieved at the proficient/advanced levels compared to 78% of the state group measured with Nebraska math standards. (Table B)

The test results that follow in tables C-H represent the achievement test results of the Emerson students in grades 3-5. These are NORM-REFERENCED tests that reflect our students' performance in comparison to other students across the country as measured by the CAT-5, published by CTB MacMillan/McGraw-Hill.

The data shows Emerson students, with nearly 59% of them coming from disadvantaged backgrounds, scored at or above the 50th percentile for all three years in which they were assessed. In addition, the specific subgroup of students for free and reduced scored within comparable ranges of the group as a whole for each grade of students measured. In one-third of the scores reported, the score for the free and reduced group equals or exceeds the score of the entire group.

In the scores reported for the 2001-2002 school year, due to the large number of SPED students in those particular classes, they were scored separately. In the fifth grade scores, it is special to note that the SPED students' averages equaled or exceeded the score for the fifth grade group as a whole.

Table A.

EMERSON ELEMENTARY SCHOOL Grade 4 Reading – NEBRASKA READING STANDARDS

	2002- 2003	2001- 2002	2000- 2001
Testing Month	April	April	April
SCHOOL SCORES			
Total – Percent of students...			
At or above Beginning Level on the Standards	100	100	100
At or above Progressing Level on the Standards	100	100	100
<u>At or above Proficient Level on the Standards</u>	<u>86</u>	<u>79</u>	<u>80</u>
At or above Advanced Standards	59	44	31
Number of students tested	35	35	30
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100
Number of students excluded	0	0	0
Percent of students excluded	0	0	0
Subgroup Scores			
1. Low Income			
At or above Beginning Level on the Standards	100	100	100
At or above Progressing Level on the Standards	100	100	100
<u>At or above Proficient Level on the Standards</u>	<u>86</u>	<u>78</u>	<u>80</u>
At or above Advanced Standards	60	43	31
State Scores			
% of Nebraska Students Below the Standards (Beginning or Progressing Levels)	24	** See Below	26
<u>% of Nebraska Students Meeting or Exceeding the Standards (Proficient or Advanced Levels)</u>	<u>76</u>	<u>** See Below</u>	<u>74</u>

** Student Data was not gathered and reported by the Nebraska Department of Education for this year.

Table B.

EMERSON ELEMENTARY SCHOOL Grade 4 Reading – NEBRASKA MATH STANDARDS

	2002- 2003	2001- 2002	2000- 2001
Testing Month	April	April	April
SCHOOL SCORES			
Total – Percent of students...			
At or above Beginning Level on the Standards	100	100	100
At or above Progressing Level on the Standards	100	100	100
<u>At or above Proficient Level on the Standards</u>	<u>89</u>	<u>87</u>	<u>90</u>
At or above Advanced Standards	56	49	72
Number of students tested	34	35	30
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100
Number of students excluded	0	0	0
Percent of students excluded	0	0	0
Subgroup Scores			
1. Low Income			
At or above Beginning Level on the Standards	100	100	100
At or above Progressing Level on the Standards	100	100	100
<u>At or above Proficient Level on the Standards</u>	<u>89</u>	<u>87</u>	<u>89</u>
At or above Advanced Standards	33	49	72
State Scores			
% of Nebraska Students Below the Standards (Beginning or Progressing Levels)	** See Below	22	** See Below
<u>% of Nebraska Students Meeting or Exceeding the Standards (Proficient or Advanced Levels)</u>	<u>** See Below</u>	<u>78</u>	<u>** See Below</u>

** Student Data was not gathered and reported by the Nebraska Department of Education for this year.

Table C.

Assessments Against National Norms

Grade 3

Test Reading

Edition/Publication Year 1992/2000

Publisher CTB MacMillan/McGraw-Hill (CAT-5)

What groups were excluded from testing? Why, and how were they assessed? No groups were excluded from this testing battery

Scores are reported as: NCES _____ Scaled Scores _____ Percentiles X

	<u>2002-2003</u>	<u>2001-2002</u>	<u>1999-2000</u>
Testing Month	April	March	March
SCHOOL SCORES			
Total Score	53.5	77.3	58.5
Number of students tested	44	27	32
Percent of total students tested	100	96	97
Number of students excluded	0	1	1
SUBGROUP SCORES			
1. Free/Reduced	60	62	54

Table D.

Assessments Against National Norms

Grade 3

Test Math

Edition/Publication Year 1992/2000

Publisher CTB MacMillan/McGraw-Hill (CAT-5)

What groups were excluded from testing? Why, and how were they assessed? No groups were excluded from this testing battery

Scores are reported as: NCES _____ Scaled Scores _____ Percentiles X

	<u>2002-2003</u>	<u>2001-2002</u>	<u>1999-2000</u>
Testing Month	April	March	March

SCHOOL SCORES

Total Score	57	78.5	59
Number of students tested	44	28	31
Percent of total students tested	100	100	1
Number of students excluded	0	0	97

SUBGROUP SCORES

1. Free/Reduced	48	69	59
-----------------	----	----	----

Table E.

Assessments Against National Norms

Grade 4

Test Reading

Edition/Publication Year 1992/2000

Publisher CTB MacMillan/McGraw-Hill (CAT-5)

What groups were excluded from testing? Why, and how were they assessed? No groups were excluded from this testing battery

Scores are reported as: NCES Scaled Scores Percentiles X

	<u>2002-2003</u>	<u>2001-2002</u>	<u>2000-2001</u>
Testing Month	April	March	April

SCHOOL SCORES

Total Score	58	73.3	49
Number of students tested	35	24	30
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100
Number of students excluded	0	0	0

SUBGROUP SCORES

1. Free/Reduced	54	66	48.7
2. 7 Additional SPED students tested and scored separately		36	

Table F.

Assessments Against National Norms

Grade 4

Test Math

Edition/Publication Year 1992/2000

Publisher CTB MacMillan/McGraw-Hill (CAT-5)

What groups were excluded from testing? Why, and how were they assessed? No groups were excluded from this testing battery

Scores are reported as: NCES Scaled Scores Percentiles X

	<u>2002-2003</u>	<u>2001-2002</u>	<u>2000-2001</u>
Testing Month	April	March	April

SCHOOL SCORES

Total Score	68	73.5	65.5
Number of students tested	35	24	30
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100
Number of students excluded	0	0	0

SUBGROUP SCORES

1. Free/Reduced	66	65	66
2. 7 Additional SPED students tested and scored separately		29	

Table G.

Assessments Against National Norms

Grade 5

Test Reading

Edition/Publication Year 1992/2000

Publisher CTB MacMillan/McGraw-Hill (CAT-5)

What groups were excluded from testing? Why, and how were they assessed? No groups were excluded from this testing battery

Scores are reported as: NCES Scaled Scores Percentiles X

	<u>2002-2003</u>	<u>2001-2002</u>	<u>2000-2001</u>
Testing Month	April	March	April

SCHOOL SCORES

Total Score	50.7	57	51.5
Number of students tested	41	23	36
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100
Number of students excluded	0	0	0

SUBGROUP SCORES

1. Free/Reduced	51.5	45.7	41.8
2. 8 Additional SPED students tested and scored separately		72	

Table H.

Assessments Against National Norms

Grade 5

Test Math

Edition/Publication Year 1992/2000

Publisher CTB MacMillan/McGraw-Hill (CAT-5)

What groups were excluded from testing? Why, and how were they assessed? No groups were excluded from this testing battery

Scores are reported as: NCES _____ Scaled Scores _____ Percentiles X _____

	<u>2002-2003</u>	<u>2001-2002</u>	<u>2000-2001</u>
Testing Month	April	March	April

SCHOOL SCORES

Total Score	58	68	50
Number of students tested	41	23	36
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100
Number of students excluded	0	0	0

SUBGROUP SCORES

1. Free/Reduced	56.5	65	45
2. 8 Additional SPED students tested and scored separately		65	